

Neither from the Old World, nor from the New World: Any Chance to get a Gold Medal?

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Abstract

◦*Purpose* – New wine producing regions can become competitors for well-established regions of the Old World and New World. In such a context, how wines from these regions are rated by experts, and especially how these wines perform in international wine contests, is a key aspect, especially to gain recognition on the international markets. However, how experts rate them remains, to our knowledge, unknown. We investigate this issue that is relevant for the entire wine value chain: from consumers and buyers who may be attracted to awarded wines coming from less known countries to producers who may find an incentive to submit wines produced from less-known grapes and benefit from the medal or award as a private quality signal.

◦*Design/methodology/approach* – We analyze empirically more than 6,000 wines which get medals (bronze, silver or gold) in a highly reputed French competition. Thanks to the estimation of several grade equations, we identify which countries of origin increase or decreases the probability of obtaining a gold medal, especially for wines from the Historic World, the former Soviet-dominated countries, and the Balkan countries.

◦*Findings* – Our preliminary results show that for some less-known wine producing countries, the score given by experts is significantly lower than for well-established wine regions.

◦*Practical implications* – Our analysis suggests that trying to get awards or medals in international wine competitions is not systematically relevant for wine producers originating neither from the Old World nor from the New World. The creation of dedicated competitions could be an option.

Keywords: Wine experts, grades